



EDUCATION SOUTH WEST TRUST BOARD

Minutes of the Trust Board of Education South West held via Teams at 6.00pm on Thursday 23rd May 2024.

Name	Role	Absent / Present
Graham Austin GA	Trustee, Chair	Present
Gail Brown GB	Trustee	Present
Annelie Fearon AF	Trustee	Present
Jennifer Gibbs JG	Trustee	Absent
Adrian Hines AH	Trustee, Vice-Chair	Present
David Potter DP	Trustee	Present
Matthew Shanks MS	Executive Principal and Trust Leader	Present
Jenny Sutton JS	Trustee	Present
Barrie Taylor BT	Trustee	Present
Executive Board		
Rob Coles RC	Secondary School Improvement Lead, Executive Headteacher of Coombeshead Academy and South Devon UTC	Present
Tracy Hannon TH	Director of Education	Absent
Jayne Keller JK	Director of School Improvement	Present
Suzannah Wharf SLW	Director of School Improvement and Executive Head of Teign School	Absent
Stuart White SW	Chief Financial and Operating Officer	Present
Invitees		
Jackie Ridding	Governor Services Clerk	Present

1	<u>WELCOME</u>	
	GA welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>	
2.1	Jennifer Gibbs was not present.	
2.2	The absence was consented to.	
3	<u>DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND BUSINESS INTERESTS</u>	
3.1	No declarations of pecuniary or other interests regarding items on the agenda were made.	
3.2	No declarations of gifts or hospitality had been received or given since the last meeting. 6.08pm RC and DP joined the meeting.	
4	<u>MINUTES</u>	
	The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21st March 2024 were approved and would be signed by the chair.	
5	<u>FINANCE</u>	



5.1	<u>Shared Services Verbal Report</u>	
	<p>SW reported the financial planning was nearly completed and they were within their target for each school. He confirmed they expected to have a balanced budget. SW noted the projected reserves at the end of the current academic year and the next academic year would be approximately £2.5M. He said they had kept redundancies to a minimum and had made some catering redundancies across the trust.</p> <p>SW explained what the unions had requested for the support staff pay award. He said he had assumed 4% across all pay scales and therefore, had added another £90,000 to the budget for support staff across the trust.</p> <p>SW reported the Kingsteignton School audit had been completed which was a clean audit.</p> <p>Trustees asked when the support staff pay award would take effect. SW said it would be back dated to 1st April 2024 and they had made adjustments in the June 2024 payroll so staff would receive the money. He said if the unions negotiated more, they would backdate the extra money.</p> <p>SW explained Kingsteignton and Kingsbridge Primary had migrated onto the ESW systems over the Easter holiday. He said the insourcing of the catering at Wynstream had been completed which would save approximately £45,000 per year.</p> <p>SW reported the operations capital funding planning had been completed and they were working on identifying contractors and planning the work. He said they were on track for moving into Teign A block after the half-term holiday. SW said they were working to secure £185,000 to refurbish Blackawton which would probably be ready for summer 2025.</p> <p>SW explained the trust had reviewed the lockdown procedures and identified the communication could be improved. He said a temporary solution would allow staff to trigger the alarm from their phone or a laptop but from September 2024, they would have an app.</p> <p>Trustees asked if they ran tests and practices for the lockdown. SW explained some schools had tested the alarm on inset days. He said there would be a risk linking it with the fire alarm system because there was a danger people would not differentiate the different sounds. SW said the app would sound an alarm on a phone or computer and any adult would be able to trigger the alarm.</p> <p>SW reported the MIS system for ITT was well developed and was ready to go live in September 2024. He said Cyber Essentials Plus, which was the technical audit for cyber security, was underway.</p> <p>SW reported they were conducting a review of all systems and processes across the trust to ensure they were running efficiently. He said they needed to proactively manage and prevent issues arising.</p> <p>SW explained the trust had introduced medical exams for employees who were involved with manual work such as caretaking, cleaning and catering jobs. He said new staff would have a full medical examination with a doctor to confirm they were fit for the role.</p>	



	<p>SW reported having considered succession planning, he would start sharing some of his role with Andrew Dodden which would reduce the impact on the trust when SW left. He said there would not be any change to Andrew's current role.</p> <p>6.29pm GB joined the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees asked if this created an opportunity for staff working below Andrew to develop their roles to keep them motivated. SW said they ensured succession for all roles and had a similar structure in other teams.</p> <p>6.32pm JS joined the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees discussed the importance of ensuring the executive team had a balanced gender composition and to ensure females had opportunities to move up. They agreed it was important to have a less flat structure in shared services.</p>	
5.2	<u>Audited Financial Statements</u>	
	SW confirmed the audited financial statements had been submitted to Companies House before 31 st May 2024.	
5.3	<u>Report from Finance and Internal Assurance Committee meeting</u>	
	GA confirmed all items discussed at the meeting had been covered in item 5.1. He confirmed there were no items to bring to the board.	
5.4	<u>Terms of Reference</u>	
	<p>GA reported they had reviewed the terms of reference and made some amendments.</p> <p>AH noted 4.2 should state internal scrutiny not security. The clerk agreed to correct this.</p> <p>Trustees approved the amended Terms of Reference.</p>	
5.5	<u>Finance and Internal Assurance Committee Chair</u>	
	GA reported Kellie Knott would be extending her time away from the Trust Board and it was not good governance for the chair of the Trust Board to be the chair of the Finance and Internal Assurance Committee. Trustees agreed that AH would become chair of the Finance and Internal Assurance Committee.	
6	<u>PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS</u>	
6.1	<u>Performance and Standards Committee Report</u>	
	<p>RC reported the headteachers had met and were working on the education improvement plan. He said the year 6 SATs had taken place and so far, they had good attendance for the year 11 and post 16 exams.</p> <p>RC informed trustees the Attendance Hub had met and they had agreed on the strategy. He said Andy Goodwin would be implementing the strategy across the trust.</p>	



	<p>RC reported detailed reviews had been carried out at the schools and they would be repeated in the autumn term to ensure progress was being made.</p> <p>RC said the Performance and Standards Committee reviewed the outcomes data. He said the primary schools should be at least in line with national data but secondary outcomes were likely to be lower. RC said the committee also discussed the curriculum overview, the 11 by 11 strategy and received an update on CPD.</p> <p>GB reported the Jane Collings, chair of governors at Kingsteignton and Penny Fitch, headteacher at Kingsteignton, fed back to the committee about their experience joining the trust. She said it had been a good opportunity for them to share their experience with the trustees.</p> <p>RC said he had followed up on the feedback given by Jane and Penny with Jayne Keller regarding governance and had agreed all LGBs would be using GovernorHub in order to streamline the processes.</p> <p>6.47pm BT joined the meeting.</p> <p>A trustee noted it had been useful to hear the headteacher identify all members of staff's experience and said there had been an issue with the caretaker not being able to continue with the Access to Work programme. She said the chair of governors had identified issues with not having access to documents. MS said he had spoken to Jane Collings who had been concerned the trust would dictate how the LGB should carry out its governance but had been pleased with the autonomy they offered once she had been reassured.</p>	
6.2	<u>Director of Education Verbal Report</u>	
	<p>MS reported exam attendance had been very good and 4 schools had been visited to moderate the SATs process. He said the raising standards meetings had started for the year 10 pupils.</p> <p>MS explained when he spoke to the Regional Director, he would highlight that the trust wanted to increase the outcomes but not to the detriment of any children. He said they would continue to improve English and maths outcomes but would continue to support all children. RC reported attendance data was improving.</p> <p>Trustees asked if there had been any resolution to the issue of children joining part way through their schooling and therefore, impacting the outcomes. MS explained the rules were changing about when a pupil's data would count which could reduce schools moving the children in order to improve their data. He said this should not be used as an excuse for the trust's English and maths to not be as high as they could be.</p>	
7	<u>STRATEGIC DIRECTION</u>	
7.1	<u>Strategic Plan Overview</u>	
	<p>MS reported they had agreed a 5-year strategy and the strategic priorities would remain the same. He said they had introduced a greater focus for headteachers.</p> <p>7.01pm DP left the meeting.</p>	



	<p>RC explained they had identified the Big 5 which were the 5 biggest issues schools were facing. He said these were attendance, outcomes, curriculum, inclusion and SEND and developing great teachers. RC said they had worked with headteachers to identify how to focus on the big problems and how to look at the impact. He said the aim was to focus on 3-5 of the big problems depending on the size of the school. JK noted this was bespoke to each school.</p> <p>7.04pm JK left the meeting</p>	
7.2	<u>Risk Register</u>	
	MS said the risk register would be reviewed 3 times per year and was discussed at the previous meeting.	
7.3	<u>CEO Verbal Report</u>	
	<p><u>Summary of correspondence with the Regional Director</u></p> <p>MS explained the previous Regional Director had suggested Exmouth should join the trust. He said following a change of headteacher and chair of governors, this did not happen. MS said the trust had supported Exmouth through an Ofsted inspection but the trust had agreed it was not appropriate to continue as they were. He said ESW asked Exmouth for feedback to explain why they felt ESW was not a suitable trust to join.</p> <p>MS said, following a Queen Street Group meeting where he had raised some issues, he met with Laura Donovan-Holmes who told him he was right to challenge because the Regional Director had not got it right. She said they had not recognised what ESW had done and she admitted the trust had not done anything wrong. MS noted this had put ESW in a positive position but they were not desperate for other schools to join the trust.</p> <p>MS reported the Regional Director would visit the trust on 15th July 2024 and he would set up a programme for the 2-hour visit. He said he had discussed Homelands Primary in Torbay who had requested to join ESW. MS explained Homelands fed into Cuthbert Mayne who ESW were supporting but the chair of governors at Homelands had been told they could not join ESW.</p> <p>Trustees said it was important to challenge and to get the answers.</p> <p><u>Trust PR and Communications - Denford Associates</u></p> <p>MS explained the trust had employed Denford Associates to look at what the trust were achieving and publicise what they did, such as, teacher training and 11 by 11. He said 4 ESW schools were the only schools in the UK who were involved in a programme to support schools in Ukraine but they had not publicised this. MS said the communications would make the trust look more attractive for new staff.</p> <p>MS said Cuthbert Mayne had requested a 3-year link with a joint management partnership and Rob Coles would visit Braunton on 3rd June 2024 and would report back about continuing working with them.</p>	
8	<u>GOVERNANCE</u>	



	<p>RC shared the meeting dates for the 2024/2025 academic year.</p> <p>Trustees approved the following changes to the LGBs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anita Turner • Kingsbridge Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rebecca Thom • Kingsteignton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ James Fisher ○ Fiona Jones ○ Helen Lambert ○ Carli Peplow ○ Grace Williams • Wynstream <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Walaa Hemesho <p>RC reported at the Chris' Forum they discussed the skills' audit and agreed they would review the questions being asked to reflect the scheme of delegation.</p>	
9	<u>POLICIES FOR REVIEW</u>	
	<p>Trustees noted the following policies had been approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Policy • DBS Policy • Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy <p>7.27pm DP re-joined the meeting.</p> <p>MS informed trustees Alex Passman would review policies from a legal perspective.</p> <p>GB suggested point 1.3 in the Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy should state that if the incident involved the headteacher, it should go to the Deputy CEO. Trustees agreed with this change and the clerk agreed to amend the policy.</p>	
10	<u>FEEDBACK FROM LGBs</u>	
	There was no feedback from the LGB meetings. RC would ensure LGB minutes were shared with the board.	
11	<u>MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIR OR CEO</u>	
	<p>The ESW Climate Action Plan was shared on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>AH explained the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy expected all schools to have a plan by 2025. MS said SLW would speak to the students to get student voice.</p> <p>SW explained the document shared what they had done, what they were doing and what they were planning. He said they had submitted a bid for a carbon reduction audit which they would need to have completed before they did any work because the audit would unlock the capital funding.</p> <p>Trustees suggested they could develop the plan as an educational opportunity looking at how decisions were made and how strategies were employed. SW</p>	



	<p>explained the funding would be spent on boilers but they would be able to get students involved in some aspects.</p> <p>Trustees noted it was a very impressive list and would be good to get the children involved. MS said it was important to educate children and staff to make changes.</p> <p>SW noted some schemes would require the trust to match fund and possibly take out Salix loans. He explained the SCA allowance for the current fiscal year was £580,000 which was not enough to maintain 15 schools and upgrade the boilers.</p> <p>Trustees noted the DfE had announced they were in the process of appointing 1000 climate advisors who would give free advice. They agreed to arrange meetings with the advisors.</p> <p>Trustees agreed to create a sub-committee to discuss the climate action plan if necessary.</p>	
12	<u>PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024 AT 6.00PM</u>	
	<p>Trustees confirmed that the next meeting of the Trust Board would be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 11th July 2024 at Teign School.</p> <p>Trustees agreed the programme of meeting dates for the 2024/2025 academic year as follows (locations to be confirmed):</p> <p>Thursday 24th October 2024 at 6.00pm Thursday 12th December 2024 at 6.30pm (following the Finance and Internal Assurance Committee meeting) Thursday 6th February 2025 at 6.30pm (following the AGM) Thursday 27th March 2025 at 6.00pm Thursday 22nd May 2025 at 6.00pm Thursday 10th July 2025 at 6.00pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.52pm.

Signed

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Dated

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